

## **The Kingdom Part I: How Near is it?<sup>i</sup>**

John the Baptist's ministry started with the following words:

Mat 3:1-2 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Jesus' ministry started with these words:

Mar 1:14-15 Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Both John the Baptist and Jesus said, "The Kingdom of God is at hand!" Where is your hand? It is pretty close to you. The message at the start of Jesus' ministry the first time He came to earth is that the kingdom is really close to you. The kingdom is within the reach of your hand.

Will the kingdom be any further away from us than it was back then? I believe that God's Kingdom is still at hand. I believe that God has a plan for a finished work and is moving all nations towards that end. If you agree, then this means God is working near your hand.....

If this is true, then why do I not see it? Why does my local church not see it?

This question will be answered in "The Kingdom Part II: The Kingdom and the New Birth".

For now, just meditate upon these two texts above. (You can add Matthew 4:17 to your list also.) Picture God's Kingdom at hand. Start with those nearest to you, your family. Then picture God's Kingdom at hand in your local church. Then picture God's Kingdom in your conference. What does God's Kingdom look like to God? Can you bring these pictures into one focus?

Joh 10:14-16 I am the good shepherd, and know my *sheep*, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd.

God's Kingdom will one day have one shepherd and be one fold or group. Do you see God's Kingdom coming together where you are? Repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand: Your hand!

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<sup>i</sup> All Scripture quoted is from the King James Version.